

STRAFFORD CONSERVATION COMMISSION

June 27th, 2023

7:00-8:00 PM at the Morrill Education Center

Board members in attendance: Micki Colbeck, Kate Bass, Chuck Sherman, Courtney Potter, Anne Fayen, and Mike Hebb, Steve Faccio.

Others in attendance: Erin Younger, Kitty Mackie

Absent: J.T. (James) Erbaugh

1. Approve May Minutes:

- Voted to approve the minutes of May 30, 2023, meeting. All in favor and approved.

2. Erin and Kitty introductions:

- Erin is a longtime resident with a lengthy interest in the environment. She has been teaching classes at several local schools related to botany, foraging and the environment.
- Kitty is a Strafford resident that has spent many hours helping rid the Ashley Forest of unwanted invasives and has attended many of the SCC hikes.

3. Mallard Population:

- There are still concerns about the population.
- After a debate we had a vote on the best way to proceed. All were in favor of reaching out to Lucy and explaining our concern and to see if she would like to take part in the study.

4. Parcel Map Report:

- Chuck and Micki finished collecting and compiling the list of property owners and managers.
- We confirmed that the map they were using was up to date.
- Kate will double check with the Morrill Homestead to make sure October 14th is available for a celebration of thanks to trail owners and managers.
- Micki will make a list of tasks to divvy out so we can proceed planning for the appreciation party.

5. Trails Report:

- Mike states that he has a couple candidates for managers of the trails that do not currently have a manager.
- The orchids are about a week away from prime bloom. They saw several varieties on the hike last weekend.
- There was discussion on the need/want of trail cameras. There was concern it was an invasion of privacy as well as concern that we need to protect the orchids from thieves.

- Micki offered to send a letter to the select board asking for approval to put up cameras.
- Voted on Micki making an educational sign explaining the difficulty of transplanting the orchids and the dangers of doing so, all in favor, approved.
- No update on Manning Trails.

6. Review of SCC Led Hikes:

- Mike and Micki had good attendance for the last walk. 8-10 people came including many from out of town.

7. Upper Valley Trails Alliance:

- Micki will purchase a membership

8. Invasive Report:

- Micki has been participating in barberry pulling at the Ashley Forest, as has Kitty.
- Kate and Anne did some work around the library. They are trying to find parcel boundaries so that they are not pulling on other properties.
- Kate, Anne and Courtney will get together and make a plan to proceed.

9. Other Business:

- Kate is organizing an event at the Howe Library on July 11th with Ben Killham.
- Anne asked if we might fund the cost for a plaque in the pocket park for Wally and Barbara Smith. She will get more information.
- Gus' movie about Stu Udall is all set for October 9th at 7pm at the Education Center. The director John de Graaf will also attend.

10. Next meeting confirmation:

- July 25th, 2023
- Meeting adjourned

Respectfully submitted by recording secretary Courtney Potter.